

A NICE CHRISTMAS PRESENT!

One of DUNKERLEY and FRANK'S Beautifully-finished Umbrellas, on Fox's Celebrated Frames, retail at Manufacturers' Prices, at 7, Swan Street, Manchester.

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MARKET STREET,
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ONE PENNY
No. 110 Vol. III.

ONE PENNY
Dec. 22, 1877.

CITY JACKDAW



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EXTRAORDINARY BARGAINS IN BILLIARD REQUISITES.

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Spectacles carefully Adapted to all Defects of Vision.

Artificial Eyes carefully Fitted.

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THE CITY JACKDAW.

DECEMBER 21, 1877.

THEATRE ROYAL.

TO-MORROW (SATURDAY), Dec. 22, Monday, Dec. 24, Boxing Night, Dec. 26, and Every Evening until further notice, will be produced, at Seven o'clock, the

GRAND CHRISTMAS PANTOMIME,

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THE SLEEPING BEAUTY!

Or,

HARLEQUIN SCANDAL AND THE WICKED FAIRY.

Written by F. C. Burnand and Alfred Thompson.

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Children (under 12 years), Morning Performances only:—

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Give place to happy festive nights:
Behold amid the evening's haze
The shining ballroom's glowing lights.
Dance on through all the festive hours,
Ye throng! Your hearts of hearts amuse,
For long shall last your dancing powers
In Wells' splendid "Dancing Shoes."

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BOOTS, SHOES, AND SLIPPERS,
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of their having commenced making Pork Pies, and that they are now executing orders
on a large scale. Messrs. V. C. & D. have many testimonials to hand, referring to the
superior quality of the L. P. P. A chief feature in these Pies is their wholesomeness.
They are made on the oldest, simplest, and most approved MELTON MOYBRAY method.
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increased consumption of the Leicester Pork Pies, and is respectfully solicited.

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Every Pie bears the Makers' Trade Mark, and each Wrapper has the Borough
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FISH, GAME, & POULTRY SALESMAN,
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JOHN KELSALL begs most respectfully to inform the Nobility,
Gentry, and the Public in general that he has now completed Extensive Alterations
in his new premises, at the above address, whereby he will be enabled to execute, with
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also secured the services of an efficient staff of experienced workmen in the various
branches of the trade, he can with every assurance guarantee all orders entrusted to him,
giving every satisfaction both as regards quality and price.

Having made arrangements for a large supply of Game, &c., during the season, J. K.
begs to inform the Gentry and Public who may require goods of that description for pre-
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J. K. takes this opportunity of returning his best thanks to his numerous customers for
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The best remedy for coughs, colds, asthma, &c. in bottles, 1s. 1½d., 2s. 9d., and 4s. 6d.—J. SOUTHERN, chemist, opposite the Asaize Courts, Manchester, and all chemists.

DECEMBER 31, 1877.

THE CITY JACKDAW.

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CRANES, TURNTABLES, AND CASTINGS,

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5,000 GENTLEMEN WANTED

to have their Boots Soled and Heeled from the best sole leather, for 2s. 6d. per pair; why pay 3s. 6d. or 4s? Set of Elastics for 1s., at NO. 64, GREAT JACKSON STREET, HULME.

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Novelties in Cossages, Bon Bons, Fancy Articles for Trees, &c., at **J. MAYERS.** Confectioner, Restaurant, and Hotel. Establishment: Silver Salver. Epernay and Sauternes—Fishes Supplied.

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THE CITY JACKDAW.

DECEMBER 21, 1877.

1877.—CHRISTMAS CAKES.

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AMUSEMENTS.

ALEXANDRA HALL, Peter Street, Manchester. To-Night, Mr. GEORGE LEYBOURNE; Peterson's Jolly Dogs; Mr. James English; Miss Marie English; Mr. J. Elton and Miss Clyde; Mr. Hamilton Winter; Brothers Ansell; Mr. Arthur Vining and Nellie Ridgway; Miss Marie Lawson; and the Excelsior Quartet. MONDAY NEXT, Mr. Frank Mordant, Ventriloquist; Miss Ada McGregor; Mr. Harry Rodgers, Negro Comedian; Mr. Tom-Mason; Miss Rose Bishop; Mr. and Mrs. Falconer, Irish Duettists; Mr. Harry Castor; Mr. and Mrs. Will West; Sisters Lillie and Florie; and other artistes. Prices 6d. and 1s. Open at 7.

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Messrs. FRASER & WELLING beg to announce that the

GREAT CALIFORNIA MINSTRELS, having arrived from America per steamship "Queen," of the National Line, will make their FIRST APPEARANCE in England, at the above Hall, ON SATURDAY EVENING, DECEMBER 22, And Every Evening until further notice.

Special Morning Performance on Boxing Day, commencing at Three o'clock. Morning Performances every Wednesday and Saturday, commencing at Three o'clock. No Performance on Christmas Evening.

Cards of Admission: Reserved Front Sofas, 5s.; Stall (Reserved), 3s.; General Admission, 2s.; Gallery, 1s.

Doors open at 7.30. Performance commence at Eight. Seats booked without extra charge at the Hall between the hours of twelve and four.

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UMBRELLAS RE-COVERED AND REPAIRED BY SKILFUL WORKMEN.

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REAL ICE SKATING DAILY.

Open from 3 to 5, and 7.30 to 9.30 p.m.

Prices: Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 1s.; Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday, 2s. BAND EVERY EVENING & SATURDAY AFTERNOONS.

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THE STOCK EXCHANGE LUNCHEON BAR.—Entrances: STRUTT STREET AND BACK POOL FOLD, CROSS STREET. THOROUGHLY CLEANSED AND BEAUTIFIED.

Chops, Steaks, Luncheons, Dinners, and Teas. Wines and Spirits. Choice Cigars. J. G. SMITH, Proprietor.

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Dining and Drawing Room Clocks and Bronzes, &c.; Electro-plated Tea and Coffee Services, Cruets, Forks, Spoons, &c.; Gold and Silver Watches 9, 15, and 18-carat Hall-marked Alberts; and a General Stock to suit the requirements of the Trade.

JOHN ASHWORTH & CO., Thomas Street and High Street, Manchester.

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L. SMITH & CO. have just Purchased a Large Lot of these Articles at very Low Prices, and are now Offering them at 2/8, 3/3, 4/-, 6/-, 7/-, 8/-, 12/-, 14/-, & 20/- per pair.—6, JOHN DALTON STREET, MANCHESTER.

HOLT AND JONES, WINE AND SPIRIT MERCHANTS,
40, DEANSGATE (Near the Exchange).
CHRISTMAS HAMPERS AS USUAL.

D. JUGLA,
COURT GLOVER,
51, DEANSGATE (BARTON ARCADE),
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Begs respectfully to call the attention of the public to his choice selection of

PARIS LATEST NOVELTIES,

Ladies and Gentlemen's Scarfs and Ties, Fans, Silk and Cambric Handkerchiefs, Gloves, Boxes, Perfumed Sachets, French Jewellery, &c.; and also a large selection of his renowned

PARIS KID GLOVES.

GLOVES MADE TO ORDER IN ANY SIZE OR COLOUR

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BRANCH ESTABLISHMENTS:

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Glove Manufactury—2, Rue Favart, Paris.

Card of Samples of Colours and Price List sent post free on application.

LLOYD, PAYNE, & AMIEL

Have the Largest Assortment of

DINING AND DRAWING ROOM CLOCKS AND BRONZES

Suitable for Presentation.

Every Description of Jewellery, 15 & 18 carat Government Stamp.

Ladies' and Gentlemen's Chains and Alberts. Cutlery and Electro-plate, from the very best makers.

HIGH STREET AND THOMAS STREET, MANCHESTER.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL.

Wholesale London, Birmingham, Sheffield, and Foreign

FANCY GOODS WAREHOUSEMEN,

JOHN BOYD & CO.,

Have REMOVED from 17 & 19, Thomas Street, to New and More Extensive Premises, situated

MASON STREET, SWAN STREET,

WHERE AN EARLY VISIT IS SOLICITED.

THE CITY JACKDAW:

A Humorous and Satirical Journal.

VOL. III.—No. 110.

MANCHESTER: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1877.

PRICE ONE PENNY.

AT LAST.

[BY LEONARD BRIGHT.]

JOSEPH PERCIVAL was in no playful humour. That brow was not being knit, those lips were not being pressed together, that chin was not being spread out, and then contracted, for nothing.

The truth is he had just met with a great disappointment—a disappointment which had cut him to the very quick, and over which he was now brooding.

He was proud, young gentleman—proud as Lucifer—and proud people not only have the knack of running their heads against stone walls, but they often persist in the interesting operation long after the discovery that the walls are getting the best, and the heads the worst, of it.

Mr. Percival had been to a Christmas party.

Miss Emily Lloyd was one of the party, and Mr. Percival had been most marked in his attentions to her all night.

He had entertained a sort of hankering after her for many months. She was as much to him as half-a-dozen other young ladies. He was sure he could have any of them when he pleased; but whether he would condescend to take pity on this one or that one, or no one, he had not up till then finally made up his mind.

Christmas, and Christmas cheer—cynics say particularly the cheer—are great magicians. What wonders they work! They melt stony hearts, make enemies friends, gladden the poor, fill the homeless with hope, bring families together from the ends of the earth, illuminate the tomb, fill the heart with sweet and tender memories, and form loves which last while life lasts.

They do other things as well, as the present story will show.

The cheer, of which he had partaken plentifully, caused Joseph Percival to come to a resolution. He had the pleasure of seeing Miss Lloyd home after the party. Availing himself of the opportunity, and materially aided by the aforesaid cheer, he popped the question, and had the extreme mortification of being rejected.

That was bad enough in all conscience, but the worst was this, that Miss Lloyd was actually engaged to James Parker, a young man whom Percival openly called friend but secretly treated as foe.

The reader now understands the cause of his agitation, alone in his father's house after the interview with Emily Lloyd, planning and plotting.

His face was like a sea in a storm on a dark December night.

Emily Lloyd and James Parker had crossed Joseph Percival's path. God help them!

"Why did I do it?" he asked himself. "What made me ask her? I had never dreamt of it till to-night. She is the first woman I ever spoke to in this way. She rejects me. She is engaged to Parker. Well, well! We'll see. Parker and you may laugh over my defeat. Laugh, laugh as much as you choose. Let those laugh who win. I know who'll win. I will. Even if I did not care a fig for you, Miss Lloyd, you will have to be my wife now that I have asked you. Joseph Percival isn't to be beaten, snubbed and snuffed out in this style. He's not done with you yet, lass. And as for you, James Parker, it will be child's play to kick a simpleton like you from my path."

Some two hours elapsed before he went upstairs, and even when he got to bed it was not to sleep, it was to complete his plot.

Percival was well known as one of the cleverest fellows in Manchester; but his cleverness was terribly dangerous because it was not regulated by any principle whatever.

James Parker, on the contrary, was noted for his gentleness and goodness.

He was just the sort of man to fall an easy victim to Percival's cruel

device, which was to tempt the other into all manner of wickedness, chiefly late hours and drunken habits, and then to leave him to sink lower and lower and at last perish.

The plan succeeded only too well. Percival—covered with smiles, forced smiles, as scoundrels usually are—soon had Parker helplessly within his grasp. The one thing that Parker—weak-minded and good-natured—could not do was to resist Percival's fascinating and gentlemanly ways. Deeper and deeper he fell, character gone, constitution ruined, heavily indebted to Percival, at least so the latter said.

Miss Lloyd did what she could to save him; but it was of no use. Percival—with his fair face and smooth tongue—could have outwitted a dozen Miss Lloyds.

At last, his fiendish work all but completed, Percival sent Parker, who could safely be trusted to continue his downward course to the bitter end now.

Mr. Percival was on his way home one cold Christmas Eve a few months afterwards when he was accosted by a shivering, cowering creature in rags.

"For Heaven's sake give me a copper; I'm starving."

"I can't, I shan't," answered Mr. Percival in his gruffest tone, without halting.

"Save me from death," pleaded the man, trotting alongside of Mr. Percival in the gutter, and holding out his hand.

"Go away, man, or I shall call the police."

Mr. Percival gave a shudder, for, passing a lamp, he saw in this wretched beggar none other than James Parker.

"Will you leave me to die?"

"There, man; trouble me no more;" and Mr. Percival, afraid of being recognised, dropped a sixpence on the footpath.

Next morning Joseph Percival rose from his comfortable couch, and commenced preparing to pass Christmas at the house of a friend.

Next morning James Parker was picked up a corpse in an outhouse near where Percival lived, and ere many hours had passed was placed in a drunkard's grave, no one knowing, except Percival himself, by whom the grave had been dug.

Percival, hardened and proud, gloried in his work, although in the sight of heaven his hands were the hands of a murderer, all besmeared with blood.

Going forward to the second act in his plot, he now gave his attention to Emily Lloyd; and so cunning and skilful and plausible were all his proposals and plans that she, too, was caught in the snare.

Very likely he meant well. But Joseph Percival could not have done well for any length of time together, at least now, if it had been to save his life or gain Heaven. He had sown the wind and must needs reap the whirlwind.

Their married life was wretchedness itself; their home was a Pandemonium. Ceasing to take any interest in his work, he was thrown idle; taking to drink, he became a total wreck.

His wife, starved and broken-hearted, sighed for death to end her misery. With hovel as her home, with not a spark of light or human love to cheer her earthly life, she prayed for death.

Her prayer was answered last Christmas Eve.

A neighbour sat by her bedside. The parish doctor, who had called that day, said she could not live many hours longer.

She had not seen her husband for days. He was on the spree. Where he got the money with which to buy drink she knew not, and dare not ask.

It was midnight. The church bells were ringing out merry peals, filling the air with melody, and proclaiming peace on earth and goodwill to man. A fast-fading light stole over Emily Percival's pale face when she heard the sweet sounds.

Thomas Percival reeled into the room and fell heavily on the floor, drunk, dead.

Mrs. Percival first raised her thin arms, and then they sank like lumps of lead on her spare form. Her eyes seemed fixed on some beautiful vision, and, dying, she gasped—*At Last! At Last!*

BOTHAM'S WORM CAKES

(Manufactured, Levenshulme.) are universally admitted to be the best and most palatable, and the only preparation to be relied on either for children or adults. 1d. each—7 for 6d.—and 1s. canisters—of all Chemists throughout the world.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

[BY FIGARO JUNIOR.]

FAITHER Christmas are you changing
With the changes of the time,
That you come to us no longer
White with snow and winter rime ;
Or, with icicles depending
From your hoary locks and beard,
Clad in frosty, stiffened garments,
As of old your form appeared ?

Now your advent is attended
With the never ceasing rain ;
Fog, and mist, and dreary dampness
Follow closely in your train ;
And no more the merry skaters
Glide to meet you on your way,
For the pools are not more frozen
Than they were in balmy May.

Yet we give you hearty welcome
For your all too brief sojourn ;
We have many things to tell you,
Some to laugh and some to mourn.
Since you last were here amongst us
Many changes have we seen ;
Sit you down the while we gossip
Of what is and what has been.

Some old friends who used to hail you
Now will hail you never more—
Perhaps you met them as they travelled
To that unknown distant shore—
And their places have been taken
By young friends yet in the cot,
Who in years to come will love you
Just as those who now are not.

There've been quarrels, separations,
Family feuds and grief and care,
Weddings, christenings, love proposals,
Troubles sore and hard to bear ;
But we'll bother you no further
With the record of the past,
Let us hope that in the future
Skies will ne'er be overcast.

Yet we fear you'll find your visit
Not so happy as of yore,
For the times are hard and grinding,
And the wolf is at the door
Of so many friends who always
Prayed you soon might come again,
But in whom your face, though welcome,
Wakens now a sense of pain.

For the poor are getting poorer,
Year by year, and day by day,
And no longer can receive you
With good cheer and laughter gay.
One by one their hopes have vanished,
And the shadows closed around ;
And they go despairing, silent,
Wheresoever they are bound.

But these thoughts are gloomy, father,
Let us touch on lighter themes,
Show us you are still unaltered,
Still the Christmas of our dreams ;
Pledge us in this foaming tankard,
Drink to everybody's health,
Drink to future merry meetings,
Drink to all increase of wealth.

Dear old friend, as years roll round,
And our hair is turning white,
May your visits grow more welcome,
And your twinkling eye more bright ;
May your grasp be still as cordial
As it was in days of old,
May our friendship ne'er be altered,
Or our greeting growing cold.

Pledge us, then, in noble bumpers,
Entertain us with thy lore,
Waken thoughts of ancient revels,
Hopes of others yet in store ;
Let the joyous laughter echo,
Banish every thought of pain,
Everyone is glad to see you—
Father Christmas, come again.

THE MYSTERIOUS GUEST.

[BY THE ANTIENT PISTOL.]

AND why does pretty May Mallinson sit brooding over the fire ; and
why does she nurse her pretty chin on the palm of her tiny hand,
while ever and anon a pent-up sigh escapes her ? 'Tis Christmas
Eve, and

"The rapture that impels
To the swinging and the ringing of the bells,"

is expressed from without in many a rade but hearty strain. The glorious old Christmas hymns are pealed forth from throats melodious and unmelodious, with many a cracked accompaniment from guttural instruments that would grate on the ear of a musical critic; but we doubt whether the most classical composer could express with better effect the boisterous joyousness on the many-hearted, many-throated revellers who have turned out in the streets of Manchester, to do honour to old Father Christmas in this the year of grace, eighteen hundred and sixty-seven.

Nor are there wanting signs of comfort and humble affluence within. We have not laid our scene in ancient baronial hall, in gruesome tapestried chamber, or in picturesque wayside inn.

Our story opens in a humble cottage in a dingy, though respectable, street in the suburbs of Manchester—unpoetical Manchester ! The gas had been turned low by that thrifty little housekeeper who sits crooning by the fire, yet we can see that the apartment has an air of tidiness and comfort. The warm, matted floor is cleanly swept; the hearthstone has been newly "stoned;" the fender and fire-irons are polished to the highest degree; the massive superannuated brass candle-sticks, and other metallic adornments on the chimney-piece, have been polished till their metallic sides must have ached; and there they stand, blinking and winking in the dimly-lighted room, as if they, too, were keeping a drowsy vigil on this Christmas Eve. As for the kitchen dresser and "squab," it would be no exaggeration of the homely simile to say that you could, literally, eat your dinner off their bare boards; you could eat and with an appetising influence, so clean and bright are they.

And there is Christmas store in galore in the back pantry, never fear, all prepared by the neat-handed and natty May Mallinson—standing rib of beef, goose, plum pudding, mince pie, and we know not what besides.

But still pretty May Mallinson sits brooding by the fire, while the midnight bells are pealing, and while Christians are invoked to awake at most unchristian hours by most unmusical choristers.

Is she like "the bonny, bonny bairn" in the song "building castles in the air," or is she dreaming out again a sad dream of bygone days ? The latter, we fear. She sees strange sights in that kitchen grate—fairy grottos, giants' castles, tottering bridges over terrible chasms; great fiery mountains and glowing valleys, with weird forms of man and beast; and as the embers crackle and crumble, the scenes change as they change in the toy kaleidoscope, or in the great kaleidoscope of life. At last there comes a final crash. The black and half-ignited crust of coal that overhangs the glowing grottos beneath comes tumbling down, and then the fairy phantoms fade into dark nothingness, as the young dreamer starts to her feet. She turns the gas higher, and then we see a pretty face, with a fluttered and troubled expression. Poor little May thinks she has read her fate in the dying, blackening embers. Foolish two-and-twenty—that was May's age—foolish two-and-twenty will indulge in these sad reveries at times, but we high-dried tough worldlings know that for two-and-twenty the embers of life will glow afresh. She or he will dream the day dream again with a chance of awakening to the bright realization. As for us, we have had our day—it may be, our cheerful evening, too—and it is time for us to think of going to bed.

May Mallinson was the only daughter of a worthy Sheffield tradesman, whose little fortune had been swept away by the great flood; and with his worldly all had been drowned the hopes of his blooming May. This only daughter came in that blithesome part of the year of which poets love to sing. She was a May flower; and her parents, with an ear to euphony and with a grateful sense of the fitness of the season had named her May. After the death of her parents she had removed with an only brother to Manchester. Shall we attempt a description of our humble beauty ? Her eyes were of a soft blue—pensive withal now, but the time was when timeliness and archness strove for supremacy there. Her face was oval, her chin dimpled, and her rich chestnut hair clustered in crispy curls around a well-shaped forehead. Her mouth was rosy and pouting—bat bat ! we hate to chronicle the

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charms of a pretty damsel after the fashion of a romantic Joe Robbins. We hope we have said enough to enlist the sympathies of our reader; and when we say that May Mallinson's first and only love had been blighted by a tragic occurrence, we need say no more to enhance the melancholy charm that hung around her.

We have just time to note a black-edged memorial card over the fireplace, which bears the legend "Sacred to the memory of George Hammond, who perished in the great Sheffield flood," when there comes a sharp rat-tat at the door, and Mat Mallinson, the brother of May, enters.

Mat is a great hulking, broad-chested fellow, with a hot temper but a tender womanish heart, and his great horny hand has the softest caressing touch when he fondles his little housekeeper May. Mat is neither vulgar nor uncultured, but when he addresses his sister he involuntarily falls into the homely Yorkshire dialect of their youth.

"Eh my pratty barn, whate'er hast' been doin' ? theau'rt sat the fire eant, lass : theau'rt as cowl as an icicle," said Mat, as he took his sister's tiny hands in his own.

"I've been thinking, Mat—"

"Thinking be hangt—I know ! Tut, tut, lass ! this world's for the livin', noan for t' dead. Put on thy best bib and tucker, little woman, to-morrow, I've invited a friend to dinner."

"Oh I can't be bothered with strangers," said May, in a pretty pouting way.

"Aye but he's a spankin' lad, just the proper fellow to catch a lass's e'e. He's worth a dozen o' you —" but a mute and sorrowful look from May put an end to Mat's eulogiums.

May was a true daughter of Eve after all, and, smiling through her tears, she asked her brother—"and who might this proper young man be ?"

Mat assumed a lubberly stage attitude, and, in a voice of mock solemnity, answered, *A Mysterious Guest!* "I dreamt last night that my little housekeeper had fallen over head and ears in love with him ; and that the blushing pair knelt at the feet of owd Mat Mallinson to entreat his blessing on their union. Bless you my cheyld !"

"Mat, you've been drinking, go to bed," interrupted May, rather petulantly.

Mat, like a great hulking, good-natured boy, did as he was told. He lighted his candle, took a gloating survey of the Christmas viands in the back kitchen, and retired to rest, chuckling over his mysterious guest. Poor May, who knew that her brother was fond of little mysteries and kindly surprises, scarce knew what to think of Mat's words. She lay dreaming in her cot of her lost love, and speculating upon the appearance of this gallant who was to usurp his place in her affections, thinking it treason to the memory of the dead that she should cherish the thoughts of another.

Christmas morning dawned, not crisp, bright, and frosty, like the traditional Christmas mornings of story-tellers, but wet, foggy, and miserable. May has gone about her household duties in a faithful, pains-taking fashion, and now the table is set with a tempting array of bright cutlery and snow-white napery; but the young housekeeper is moody and absent. Aunt Grizelda, romping laughing cousin Mary, and a wooden, dull witted uncle John, are in their places, but Mat is late.

"Dearie me ! whatever has become of that lad ? The dinner will be clean spoiled," were the impatient remarks of housekeeper and guests. But Mat, rosy and roysterer, with a merry twinkle of mysterious mischief in his eye, makes his appearance at last.

"Art ready, good foaks ?" he cried. "Why, how is this ? there's a plate and knife and fork short. Look sharp, May, another cover—there—there at your own right hand, he'll be here in a crack."

"Goodness gracious, Mat !" said the agitated May; "I thought you were but romancing last night. Who is this guest you are making such a fuss about ?"

"Well, there's a good ten or fifteen minutes grace for him yet. Take that goose and beef out o'th' oon, and put them on the fender, and aw'll just spin you a bit of a yarn about this mysterious guest."

Mat, who had been evidently drawing from the stores of bold-inspiring John Barleycorn, cleared his throat, laid aside his broad Yorkshire dialect, and proceeded in a good swinging style with his narrative.

"Once upon a time—that's the way you story-tellers begin, I think. Once upon a time there dwelt—"

"A miller on the river Dee," chimed in the wooden uncle.

"You and the miller of the Dee be shot. Once on a time there dwelt in Sheffield a trim and hearty lad as ever broke bread or trod in shoe leather. His heart was in the right place, and his head was properly screwed on ; but he was just a trifle wild and wayward. He had a biggish stock of wild oats, and they could not be sown in a day, nor in a single year perhaps, for that matter, and some of his sober-sided friends looked gloomily over their spectacles at—at Dick—yes that was his name. Now Dick, he loved a pretty maid—all Dicks do ; and the pretty maid loved Dick, which is not always the case in plays and novels. Everything went right for a time—right as a trivet, although that's perhaps not a very poetical phrase ; but weary, sorrowful days were in store for Dick and his sweetheart. Some of Dick's mad frolics and pieces of devilment got to the ears of what shall we call her—his Polly. There were black looks and frowns where there had been kisses and smiles ; the old folks put their ban on the match, and the door of his sweetheart's home was barred against Dick—"

"Whatever's the matter wi' thee, May ? theau'rt as white as a dish-clout, lass ; take a wee drop o' brandy, my tale will soon be done."

"Poor Polly looked on the matter as a lover's tiff. She thought Dick would humble himself, that explanation and amendment would follow and all would be well. Lack-a-days ! that angry parting was to be an eternal one. Dick was as proud as Lucifer. He tried to drown his sorrow that night in the wildest frolics, and it was early on the following morning when he reached Malin Bridge on his way home—"

"May, May, lass, I must give over if you take on so," cried Mat, glancing uneasily at his sister.

"Go on, Mat, it's nothing."

"Well, when he reached Malin Bridge, he saw and heard something that drove both love and drink out of his head. There came a crack louder than the loudest thunder, which was succeeded by crash upon crash, and a terrible rushing noise—such a fearful tumult as will, perhaps, never be heard again in these parts till the world goes asunder. A fearful volume of water swept past him, the outer current of which almost engulfed him. Dick saw such forms and heard such cries in that torrent, that he became stupefied and half mad. He pinched himself, he shut his eyes and opened them again, thinking the whole vision was a drunken nightmare ; but it was not—he had been a witness, and almost a victim of the great Sheffield flood.

"Now, when the flood had swept past him, Dick took a strange resolve—a wicked, cowardly resolve, unworthy of the man, and unworthy of the awful occasion. Like many a hot-headed lover besides, he thought that because he had been crossed in love the sun and moon would not shine for him again, and that life was henceforth to him a blank. He knew that if he withdrew from the country silently and secretly that night it would be at once surmised that he had been swept away by the flood, for his way homeward lay through the valley through which it had swept. Here was a chance to wring the heart of the poor girl, who, as he thought in that maudlin, stupid moment, had wronged him. 'They'll think, perhaps,' he said to himself, 'a little more kindly of the poor devil whom they drove from their door when they think of his fate.' 'Twas a weakly, womanish sort of malice, this ; but people will do queer things when they are overcome by the effects of love and whisky.

"It is difficult to say what other motives may have actuated him. Perhaps he saw himself in the future as the hero of a sensational story ; but his mad plan was carried into effect. He dried himself by a brick-kiln, and, after tramping many weary hours through the night, he took train at a distant station, sped away into some strange country where he was not known, and was mourned as one dead."

Here Mat looked at the clock and fidgeted, but he again proceeded—

"Well, a better frame of mind came across poor Dick. He heard that his sweetheart was true to him—"

And here Mat paused again, as if his narrative began to run out.

"Oh Mat, Mat ! what does all this mean, why don't you go on ?" cried the agitated May, clutching at her brother's arm.

"I'm waiting for the hero himself to put the climax to my story ; surely he's not going to disappoint me."

There is the clatter of a cab over the street. Confound it, it's stopping at No. 36 ! No, it's coming here ! There is ran-tan at the door. Mat is already in the passage, and May is leaning feebly against the kitchen door. There is a hand-shaking and a low murmured salutation, but May has caught the sound of that voice, and in another moment she has fallen fainting into the arms of George Hammond.

Ah, Mat Mallinson ! that was a somewhat cruel joke of yours ; and might have proved fatal to your little housekeeper.

There were but poor appetites for that Christmas dinner. Sweet solemn joy o'ermastered all the guests ; but in less than a month there was a merry wedding that made amends for all.

JACKDAW

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Persons who wish to see the *City Jackdaw* regularly are respectfully recommended to order it of their Newsagent, otherwise, they may be, and often are, disappointed in not being able to obtain copies. Or, it will be sent by post from the Publishing Office, 51, Spear Street, Manchester, every week for half-a-year on payment of 3s. 3d. in advance, being posted in time for delivery at any address each Friday morning.

TALES FOR THE NEW YEAR.

A Number of original Stories, Sketches, and Verses, similar to those given this week, will be published in the *City Jackdaw* of Friday next (the 28th instant). Newsagents and others would do well to send in their orders at once to the Publishing Office, 51, Spear Street.

WHAT FOLKS ARE SAYING.

JHAT Beaconsfield and the Queen are getting very thick.

That Disraeli made Her Majesty an Empress, and Her Majesty made Disraeli an Earl.

That, ever since then, they seem unable to get on without each other.

That Beaconsfield indulges in a run to Windsor every other day, while the Empress of India honoured Hughenden Manor with a visit on Saturday last.

That the present Prime Minister of England is a wily old dog.

That these frequent interviews must mean something.

That nobody can tell what the upshot of them may be.

That those of us who live longest will know most.

That England is pre-eminently a Christian country.

That, in proof of this, next Tuesday will be given up to the heathen duty of eating, drinking, and being merry.

That, appropriately to the season, Turkey is having its goose cooked.

That the Russians promise to see that it is well basted.

That there is no doubt they will keep their word.

That Benjamin's head has become Dizzy through studying the subject of British Interests.

That he created an Empress of India and Earl of Beaconsfield specially to protect them.

That sensible people think they were as safe before.

That he's afraid the Russians want to get possession of the Suez Canal; some who don't know say so is (Suez) Derby.

That Mr. W. T. Charley says we must now go in for an armed intervention against Russia.

That the senior member for Salford faithfully represents the Conservative statesmanship of our day.

That Beaconsfield and Charley seriously mean to drag us into the war.

That lively times are in store both for them and us.

That the split in the Cabinet is only one more proof that the Liberal reaction has set in with a vengeance.

That the speech delivered by Mr. Joseph Cowen, M.P., in the Free Trade Hall, on Wednesday, was sufficient of itself to stamp him as a man of mark.

That young Liberals need not despair so long as such men as Chamberlain, Mundella, Trevelyan and Cowen are good enough for twenty or thirty years' more work.

That, as we write, we almost catch the opening chimes of the Christmas Bells.

That the *City Jackdaw* and his faithful P. D. unite in wishing everybody A Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year.

DR. THOMSON'S LIST OF LAWFUL AMUSEMENTS.

THOSE who have tried it don't need to be told that it is no light matter to make a convert of a theologian. Gentlemen who are styled "reverend" are usually so wise as to the next world and ignorant of the present world that what ordinary men say to them goes in at the one ear and out at the other. When the Rev. Dr. Thomson took it into his head to condemn theatres, actors, and theatre-goers some time ago, we addressed him so painly, in reply, that we fully counted on our having converted him. Not at all. He is at it again, and, we regret, the old man is as strong in him as ever. It is perfectly impossible, he says, to make the theatre a decent place. Even supposing all its evil surroundings were removed, he would still affirm that no true Christian—no man who was endeavouring to follow Christ—could possibly feel himself at home in a theatre, or could frequent it without injury to his spiritual health. The reason why the stage could not be reformed was that those who catered for the public were obliged to provide amusement, and something spicy rather than anything moral, and if morality stood in the way of pleasure, morality must go to the wall. He would not denounce dramatic composition, or even dramatic entertainments, wholesale and indiscriminately. He did not condemn acting in itself as necessarily sinful. Some men had a faculty of histrionic imitation. There were few things more delightful than to see and hear men exercise it. The vivid personation of a character was not a wrong thing, though to devote one's whole life to pursue it was neither dignified nor worthy of a rational being. The counteracting influences of a demoralised stage were the indirect means of religious education, encouraging better tastes, and teaching people to find their pleasures at home, to try to awaken in their minds a love for art, good music, pure poetry, and the study of nature. In these God had provided them with abundant resources.

While saying all this, however, he was good enough to admit that he was as far as possible from being an enemy to amusements which were worthy of the name, those relaxations from graver pursuits, which all stood in need of, which revived the flagging spirits and brought alike sunshine and music from the airy regions of the imagination to brighten the sober scenes of a prosaic life. Here, it seemed to us, we discerned a silver lining to the dark cloud. We accordingly wrote to the reverend gentleman asking him to be so condescending and kind as to draw up a list of what he considered to be lawful amusements. Here is the interesting list which we received in response, and it need not be added that it affords us no ordinary degree of pleasure to place it before the public, as we do to-day:—

LAWFUL AMUSEMENTS.*

1. Blind man's buff.
2. Singing sacred solos and songs.
3. Playing on the pianoforte, and, the Scotch bagpipes excepted, musical instruments generally.
4. Kiss in the ring.
5. Smoking cutty pipes and drinking toddy.
6. Choice extracts of theology.
7. A good dose of drafts and the smallest crumb of chess.
8. Reciting, conversing, and whistling.
9. Playing at "the post."
10. Recalling the heads of last Sunday's sermons.
11. Discussing the organisation existing amongst Congregationalists.
12. Conundrums and charades of an innocent and wishy-washy character.
13. Listening attentively, reverentially, and silently to anything which any learned divine in the company may choose to say.
14. Telling stories destitute of point or mirth.
15. Laughing when there is nothing to laugh at.
16. Comparing "The Confession of Faith" with "The Thirty-Nine Articles."
17. Pitying unhappy theatre-goers and poor actors.
18. A little more of kiss in the ring, and a great deal more of Thomson's theology.

* The order in which the several items in this list may be taken can be varied at pleasure, but it must always be understood, nevertheless, that under no circumstances must anything be added to or taken from the list itself.

TO SMOKERS: { Mounted Briars, Meerschaums, Cigar Cases, Tobacco Pouches, Cigarettes, and Smokers' Requisites of every description. } WITHECOMB, 32, VICTORIA-ST., & 66, MARKET-ST.

A MIDNIGHT ATTACK.

[BY JAMES MASON.]

WHAT I am about to tell you formed one of the most genuine Christmas adventures in which I have had the honour to play any part, however humble.

I was tutor in a gentleman's family at the time. Our house occupied a lonely situation. The only other houses on the estate, which was a large one, were those of a dairyman, a shepherd, and a ploughman. The next nearest dwelling was over a mile away.

The master and mistress had gone to spend Christmas with the father and mother of the latter, the only persons left being the four children, the housekeeper, three servant girls, a young servant lad, and myself.

On Christmas Eve I felt very unsettled. To kill the time was a hard task. In the absence of anything better, I wandered about the deserted roads and paths in the neighbourhood, and at last found myself having a festive cup with the dairyman and the shepherd.

Getting home about eleven, I consoled myself, or tried to console myself, with another glass, and another cigar, after which I tumbled into bed, uttering the prayer that I mightn't be doomed to spend another Christmas in such an unutterably and intolerably dull corner of Her Majesty's dominions.

Once in bed, I soon went to sleep.

After a time, however—it appeared to be hours—I heard, or thought I heard, a gentle tapping at my chamber door.

It could not be. I turned myself over and resumed my slumbers.

But the raps came louder and oftener than before.

"Well, what is it, pray?" I shouted, yawning.

"Please, Mr. Mason, some one's a-breakin' into the house, sir."

The voice was the voice of the housekeeper.

"Nonsense, Mary, nonsense," I said, rolling from between the blankets.

"It is true, sir; oh, do come quick, please; how they are a-goin' it!"

"I'm coming, woman; but, goodness gracious, you would not have me face either you or the burglars in my night-shirt."

"They'll be in, Mr. Mason, and all the chilid will be killed if you don't come at once!"

"Why, Mary, what an unreasonable woman you are!" I said, opening the door and pulling on my trousers; "how could I encounter a band of robbers in this state? To look on you even unnerves me."

"Listen, sir; they're at it again; sure, and they'll soon be into the nursery. Oh dear, oh dear, what's to be done?"

"The best thing for you to do, Mary, is to hold your noise. Where are the girls?"

"All in the kitchen, sir, a-shakin' and a-cryin'."

"What fools they are; I must see them; they must keep quiet."

"You mustn't go into the kitchen, Mr. Mason; the girls are all undressed."

"Well, tell them to get dressed at once; I must go out that way to see what it is that's really the matter."

The housekeeper proceeded into the kitchen on her mission in the interests of decency and morality. I fastened my braces, pulled on my boots, and got rigged out in an old top coat.

There was no doubt of it. Some desperate attempt was evidently being made to enter the house. I could hear the noise—the sort of thud, thud, thud only too distinctly—but where it proceeded from I could not make certain of, I standing in the lobby.

Slipping upstairs and going into the nursery, I ascertained that the children were all right, and sound asleep.

"Please, sir, the girls are all dressed now, but they're a-cryin' dreadfu', " said the housekeeper, as I returned to the lobby.

Going into the kitchen, I asked the lad where Flora, our old shepherd's dog, was.

"Oh! we have not seen her, sir," screamed one of the girls.

"She's been a-missin' all night," said the boy.

"The robbers has gone and poison'd her," broke in the housekeeper.

"None of you have seen her?" I inquired.

"No," all moaned, in reply.

"Then I must find her," I said; and, opening the kitchen door which led into a great open yard, that was surrounded by the out-houses, I called the dog's name several times.

There was no response. I now began to feel a little fear myself. Had I found Flora—one of the wisest and best watch-dogs I have ever known—

she would have been a host in herself in the present emergency. She would have been equal to at least any two men, and, young and strong, I fancied myself equal to any vagabond in the country.

Now that Flora, my faithful friend, was not forthcoming, I took down the master's double-barrelled gun, which was always kept loaded.

"Oh, sir, don't be a-doin' any murther," yelled one of the girls on seeing me with the weapon in my hands.

"If you don't keep quiet I may do some mischief to you," I said, getting angry.

The noise was as constant as before, and seemed to be growing louder.

"Now, look here," I said, turning to the four women, who were huddled together in a corner; "this is no time for fooling; has any of you invited anyone to the house to-night, or was any of you expecting anyone?"

"No," was the universal groan, in response.

"It is well," I continued, "for I am going through the court and round the house, and I shall shoot any person and every person I meet."

"What a dreadfu' night is this," the housekeeper sobbed, as I left the kitchen.

In the yard I came across no one. Proceeding to the end of the house from which the sounds seemed to come, I called out three times that if any person was there he had better speak, as I meant to shoot.

There being no reply, I fired one of the barrels into the air. Wending my way round to the back of the house I let off the other barrel in the kitchen garden.

Returning to the house, I found that the housekeeper and two of the girls had fainted on hearing the shots, being under the impression that I had killed several men each time.

Seeing that I could make nothing of the women, or get any assistance from them, I told the lad to find a candle in order that we might search every room in the house.

We did so, but still without result.

"We have been everywhere," I said to the housekeeper, now recovering; "but have found nothing, although the mysterious noise keeps coming every now and then."

"Did you say you had been in the best bedroom, Mr. Mason?" inquired the housekeeper.

"No, everywhere except there; but I shall go there now."

Into the best bedroom I accordingly issued. All was still. But just as I was leaving, these dull, dead thuds, thuds, thuds broke on my ears once more, coming now, it appeared, from underneath the bed.

"I have him at last," I thought; and, peering beneath the bed, I there saw my good old friend Flora, who had wandered there in order to enjoy a particularly comfortable snooze on Christmas Eve.

Good old creature! She was happy. She had heard the rumpus we were making, and, in order to assure us that everything was quite right, she had continued wagging that massive tail of hers all night.

But the best intentions sometimes fail. So it proved then; for it was poor Flora's tail striking against the carpeted floor which had caused all the bother attending that desperate midnight attack on Christmas Eve.

LOOK UPON THIS PICTURE AND ON THAT.

QUR Spring Gardens contemporary has been at it again, as the following extracts will show:—

(From the "City Jackdaw," of Nov. 10, 1876.)

WHAT FOLKS ARE SAYING.—That in honour of the anniversary of the *Jackdaw*, Mr. Browne, of the Prince's, has made a special engagement. That, in consequence, the attenders at the Prince's, next week, will be hearing what Vokes are saying.

(From our *Spring Gardens Contemporary*, of Dec. 14, 1876.)

PRINCE'S THEATRE.—Sir, We write this brief epistle, not by way of complaint, but of remonstrance. In each week's issue of your valuable journal you publish sundry witticisms, under the head of "What Folks are Saying." We accept the implied compliment therein bestowed upon us, but should be obliged if in future you would head these bits of fun "What the Vokes's Are Saying?"—We are, sir, yours respectfully, THE VOKES FAMILY.

Our own joke was only a poor one. It wasn't worth cribbing. However, it might have been as well for our hard-up contemporary to have prigged our other joke while he was at it—*Vox Populi Vokes Dei* (in the gallery).

CIGARS at WITHECOMB'S are the CHOICEST, 3d., 4d., 6d., 9d., 1s., & 2s. 6d. each.

CHRISTMAS BOXES.

[BY FIGARO JUNIOR.]

I.

"*J*WONDER whether I'll get any Christmas boxes this year," said little Jack Stubbs, the grocer's boy, to himself. "If I don't, we shant have any Christmas dinner, that's certing, for old Screwby says he wont have any more work to give mother till after New Year."

"Now, last Christmas," said he, continuing his soliloquy, "I got more'n a pound. There was Mrs. Williams, what guv me five shillin' all at once, cause she said as how I reminded her of her own little boy what died. But Mrs. Williams herself is dead now, so I shan't get no more five shillins there. Rum thing it is that all good people goes and dies. I wonders the Lord don't make 'em live longer for examples to others. Then there was old Mr. Goodman; he were allus safe for three bob, but he's gone away to live i' Luunon. And Mr. Draper tipped me eighteenpence last year, but I heerd him tellin' master, yesterday, as how the times were so bad, that he didn't know hardly how to make both ends meet, which looks fishy for me, and other people says the same. Ah!" said he with a sigh, "I don't expect I shall get more'n ten shillin' this year, if I get that."

But having decided that ten shillings would be about the figure, Jack prudently next turned to the consideration of how they should be spent, for, being the head of the family since his father's death, his mother always paid greater deference to Jack's opinion than parents generally do to the judgment of children of fourteen.

"Let's see, now," thought he, "ten shillin' aint much, but it'll get a piece o' beef and a puddin. Now, shall we have a large piece o' beef and a small puddin, or a big puddin and a little bit o' beef?"

This was a weighty question and took fully five minutes of anxious thought to solve. At last Jack made up his mind. "I likes beef," said he; "but the children likes puddin. We'd better have a big puddin. Perhaps master 'll give us some oranges, too. He guv me a dozen last year, so we can have a tidy spree."

"Jack," called out his master, Mr. Smith, "the baskets are ready."

And Jack took up the baskets gaily, though they were a terrible weight, and trudged off to deliver the groceries and get his Christmas boxes.

II.

"I wonder if we shall get any Christmas boxes this year," said Mr. Draper to his wife as they sat at breakfast before he went to town.

"Well, dear," replied Mrs. Draper, "you know in Papa's letter yesterday he said he had sent us three brace of pheasants and a turkey and a barrel of oysters. Your uncle in Yorkshire, too, will send his usual hamper, of course, for he's never missed for ten years. Then our Cheshire friends are not likely to forget us; and Robinson, the wine merchant, has sent over half-a-dozen of port, and half-a-dozen of sherry. Trade is so bad, he says, that he's sorry not to be able to send a dozen of each, like last year."

"I'm afraid Robinson is getting mean," said Mr. Draper; "trade is bad, but that's no excuse for stinginess at Christmas. But some people are glad of any excuse to get out of giving."

"Trade certainly is bad," continued he, sententiously. "Do you know I shall hardly clear more than a thousand or fifteen-hundred this year?"

"Dear me," said his wife; "we shall have to economise then. And I really must have some dresses for New Year's parties."

"And I," said Mr. Draper, "have set my heart on getting that picture by Dawbwell. Really a masterpiece, and so cheap, too. Only a hundred and fifty. You're quite right, dear, we shall have to economise."

Just then there was a knock at the door, and a servant entered.

"Please sir," said she, "the grocer's boy wants a Christmas box."

"A Christmas box! what for?"

"Please sir, he's brought the things from Smith's all the year."

"Well, he's been paid to do it, I suppose. I don't approve of this Christmas box system. It encourages a feeling of dependence on the part of the poor. If they get it once they expect it always."

"Please sir, he said you gave him eighteenpence last year."

"Oh, I did, did I? That proves what I said. He's got no business to expect eighteenpence every year. Tell him I'll see what I can do next Christmas."

The servant left the room, and Mr. and Mrs. Draper went on with their breakfasts.

"Don't you think, dear," said he to his wife as he was leaving for town,

"don't you think I'd better go to the railway station and see if that hamper has arrived from uncle? He'll be sure to have sent it."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Draper; "it's no doubt arrived by this time. After sending it all these years, uncle is not likely to be so mean as to neglect to do so this."

Just as Mr. Draper was going out, a telegram came. He opened and read it.

"It is from uncle," said he to his wife; "he is coming to spend Christmas with us, and is bringing his Christmas box himself."

"Oh, how delightful," said Mrs. Draper; "when is he coming?"

"He doesn't know whether it will be to-day or to-morrow, and he says we're not to trouble to meet him, for he'll come along here."

"Dear, dear, and perhaps he'll be here to-day. I must go and get the best bedroom ready at once. And you won't mind having beef for dinner to-day, will you? I know you don't like beef, but uncle doesn't care for anything else, and we must humour him, you know."

"Oh, of course, do anything and everything you like. We must try all we can to please him while he's here, no matter how it puts us out. It isn't every day one gets an uncle with five thousand a year to come and see one, and we must make hay while the sun shines."

After which profound reflection, Mr. Draper departed.

III.

A few hours after the conversation related in the last chapter, Uncle Broadacres stepped out of the Yorkshire train which had just arrived at Victoria Station. Evidently he belonged to the fine old English gentleman school: wore knee breeches, and a long waistcoat, a white neckcloth and a real old fashioned coat. He might have been sixty or seventy, but his step was still firm, and his eye bright, and the sound of his voice as cheery as the chimes on Christmas morning.

The first business of the old gentleman was to attend to his luggage, conspicuous amongst which was an enormous hamper from which the tail of a pheasant protruded, giving one a very shrewd notion of the contents.

When the luggage had been all got out of the train, Mr. Broadacres seemed at a loss to decide what to do.

"I've a great mind," said he to himself, "to take a walk through the town before I go on; and I might then buy some little thing for my niece."

Deciding at last to do this, he had the luggage, hamper and all, taken into the left luggage office, and set off on a voyage of discovery in the town.

Mr. Broadacres knew nothing of Manchester, where he had never been before. He wandered about staring at the shop windows—no uninteresting sight for a country gentleman, who lived from one year's end to the other in the same quiet Yorkshire village—and buying all sorts of toys and trinkets for Mrs. Draper and the children. One purchase he made for himself, too, for as he was passing a picture shop he was particularly struck by a picture of a celebrated racer, of which he had been an enthusiastic admirer in his young days. He paid the price demanded willingly, and the picture dealer was naturally prompted to try if he could do a little more business with a customer who appeared so regardless of cost. But it was of no use. Mr. Broadacres did not care much for pictures, except, as in the case of that of the racer, they had some special interest for him, and he refused to be tempted. Still, he greatly admired some of the works of art which the dealer showed him, and his attention was particularly attracted by a fine painting representing a beautiful Cumberland landscape.

"That picture's by Dawbwell, sir; one of his best; sold it this morning for a hundred-and-fifty. It's worth as much again; but the times are bad, and the gentleman who bought it, Mr. Draper, wouldn't give more."

"Mr. Draper!" said the old gentleman.

"Yes; Mr. Draper, of Victoria Park."

"Hum; this must be my nephew," thought Mr. Broadacres; "the times are not bad with him, evidently," and he left the shop.

Mr. Broadacres could hardly be said to have lost his way, for he had nowhere particular to go to, and of course nowhere to ask for, but after two or three hours' walking about he found himself in the upper part of Oxford Road.

Just as he had stopped to consider the advisability of going back to the station to fetch the luggage, an omnibus, marked "Victoria Park," passed him.

"Ah!" thought he, "the place must be up this way then. I may as well go on and send the servant for the luggage." And as on inquiry he

found himself to be only about a quarter of a mile from the Park, he walked onwards.

IV.

Just as Mr. Broadacres reached the gate of Victoria Park little Jack was coming out, returning from his fourth journey to that fashionable locality since we saw him in the morning. The boy's eyes were very red. He was trying not to cry, but the tears would keep coursing down his cheeks, and altogether he presented a very woe-begone appearance.

"Only two-and-fivpence all the blessed day," said Jack, to himself. "Only two-and-fivpence, and last year I had more'n a pound. Ah! we shant have even a little bit o' beef or a little pudden, let alone big uns. And what bothers me is that the children will cry so. Poor kids, they can't keep in their feelings like me."

And so saying, he burst out crying as if his heart would break.

"What's the matter, my little man?" said a kindly voice in his ear. "Are you hurt, or have you lost something?"

"Nothing, sir, nothing," said Jack, drying his eyes, and ashamed that he, a man, should be caught crying; "it's nothing, sir, only my fun."

"Very strange fun, yours, my boy," said his interlocutor; "come, I see there's something troubling you. Tell me what it is."

"Well, you see, sir, I—" and a fresh burst of tears choked his utterance.

"Go on, go on, tell me all about it."

"Well, you see, sir,—sob—people allus used to gi' me Christmas boxes at Christmas, and we used to—sob—get our Christmas dinner with 'em; that's mother and me, and Tim, and Betsy, and Bob, and they wont gi' me nothin' this Christmas, and we shant be able to get any beef and no pudden, and the kids'll cry—sob—and perhaps mother'll cry, too."

"Is that all, my boy?"

"All?" and Jack looked up indignantly, as if there could be any greater calamity than the loss of a Christmas dinner.

"Nay, I did not mean that it's nothing. But if that's all the cause of your trouble we can soon set it straight. But tell me why people wont give you anything."

"Well, sir, you see last Christmas I had more'n a pound. My eye, what a spree we had," and Jack's eyes glistened at the thought of last year's revel.

Mr. Broadacres—for his was the voice speaking to Jack—Mr. Broadacres' eyes glistened too, for the remembrances of many happy Christmases in the time long, long ago flashed across his mind at Jack's words.

"Well," continued Jack, "as I was sayin' I had more'n a pound last Christmas. Mrs. Williams guy me five shillin', and Mr. Goodman, he guy me three, and Mr. Draper eighteenpence, and lot of others bobs and tanners. But now Mrs. Williams is dead, and Mr. Goodman's gone to Lunnon, and Mr. Draper wont give me anythin', nor scarcely anyone else. They all says it's hard times, and I've only got two-and-fiv altogether. I knows it aint such hard times with them as it is with us."

"What Mr. Draper is that?" asked Mr. Broadacres, with much interest.

"Him as lives in the big house in the Park. There, you can see it through the trees."

"My nephew," thought the old gentleman. "Tell me what he said, my boy."

"Well, sir, I didn't see him, of course, but the servant brings down a message to say as how Mr. Draper didn't approve of the system of Christmas boxes, 'cause they makes poor people dependent; and he said, too, that it aint because he guy me eighteenpence last year that I must expect it every year, and he'll see what he can do next year. And the servant, what knows me, told me she heard her master say that the times is hard, and he's goin' to economise—tho' I dunno what that is. And I've had to take a basket full o'things there most every day, remarked Jack, pathetically. They told Bill Brown, the butcher's boy, the same thing, 'cause he told me they did," the boy added.

There was a pause when Jack had finished this long speech. Mr. Broadacres looked very grave and thoughtful. "Going to economise are they," said he to himself; "and this is the way they begin! Where do you live, my boy?" said he to Jack.

Jack told him, and they went home together. It was the old, old story which Jack's home revealed. A poor widow, with three or four children, left to struggle with the world as best she could, or to go to the wall. Thousands of such disappear into the social abyss every year, and only now and then, when the whirlpool slackens, and some of the wrecks come to the surface, does the world ever trouble itself about them. Jack's mother had nothing to depend on but the miserable pittance earned by

sewing for a "Slop shop," and the few shillings which Jack got weekly from the grocer's, the whole income being perhaps twelve shillings, if sewing was plentiful, and Mrs. Stubbs worked till late at night; often as little as six shillings in a bad week.

I need not detail the conversation Mr. Broadacres had with Mrs. Stubbs. All that it is necessary to say is that Jack's anxiety with regard to their Christmas dinner was relieved in a highly satisfactory manner, and Mrs. Stubbs has been heard to tell a neighbour that she and her family will never in future have to go without a Christmas dinner, or a dinner at any other time, as long as Mr. Broadacres lives, or, perhaps, even after his death.

V.

Mr. and Mrs. Draper waited very anxiously all Christmas Eve for Uncle Broadacres, but he did not come. They decided that he must have missed his train and would arrive in the morning, with which comforting reflection they went to bed. Christmas morning came, but no uncle put in an appearance. Instead of him, the following letter was brought by the postman while Mr. and Mrs. Draper were at breakfast.

"My dear nephew and niece,—I got to Manchester yesterday afternoon, and walked towards your house. On the way I accidentally learned, from a grocer's boy, that you disapproved of the system of Christmas boxes, that you thought people could not expect them every Christmas, and that you are beginning to economise. As I was anxious not to interfere with your laudable economic plans by putting you to extra expense on account of my visit, I thought the best thing I could do was to go back to Yorkshire again, especially as I had to take back a certain hamper which I had brought for you as a Christmas box, but which I could not ask you to stultify yourselves by accepting. Economy, my dear nephew and niece, is a very fine thing, but I should not advise you to begin it at Christmas time. If, however, the times are so bad with you that you must go in at once for economy, don't you think it better to begin by not buying any more landscapes by Dawbwell, instead of by refusing eighteenpenny Christmas boxes?—Yours truly,

"JAMES BROADACRES."

After reading the letter, Mr. and Mrs. Draper looked at each other in a very crestfallen way for some time before they spoke.

"There's an end of our hopes of a Christmas box from that quarter," said Mrs. Draper, at last.

"Yes," said her husband, savagely, "and of our chance of inheriting any of the five thousand a year."

EYES RIGHT!

"UNCLE" writes to the *Examiner* on a question of supreme importance during the festive season. "Last pantomime season," he says, "our excellent Bishop was good enough to let the public know that one of his lady friends found fault with certain parts of the pantomimes, and was obliged to tell her children to shut their eyes during the performance of such parts. Whether the dear children did shut them or not, I think, was not reported. I write now on behalf of the extensive family of uncles, and would beg the Bishop to entreat his fair friend to go as early as possible to all the pantomimes forthcoming in Manchester, and tell him, with a direct view to early publication, either by a letter to the newspapers or a speech at a meeting where reporters are present, at what part of the performance she told her children to shut their eyes. We uncles would then be able to clear ourselves with pious parents, if adverse criticism should fall foul of the *Sleeping Beauty* and the rest of the entertainments. We would, at least, tell our little friends when they ought to shut their eyes." No doubt, Dr. Frazer and his lady friend will yield prompt compliance with this request. It may be questioned, however, by those who know human nature best, whether the children, old or young, would exactly and altogether close their eyes when commanded to do so. Human nature is weak. We have heard it said that boys and girls at school never fail to read those chapters in the Bible which they are solemnly summoned to skip. Still, no harm would be done by giving the order when the eyes of those who go to see the pantomimes ought to be closed, wholly or in part. It is said that the principal article of attire worn by some of the prettiest female figures in the Prince's pantomime this year is a pair of slippers!

CRACKER FOR CHRISTMAS (by Master Greedy): Why are mince pies like Othello? Because they are Moorish!

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THE PRINCE'S PANTOMIME.

AT the Prince's Theatre on Tuesday night last was commenced what may safely be predicted as a long and brilliant pantomime season.

For the production of Mr. Farnie's *Babes in the Wood*, we should imagine that all the ends of the earth have been searched to bring together the clever company, the dazzling costumes, the scenic marvels, the rapid surprises and the countless glories which go to make up this wonderful Christmas mask. To merely catalogue all that is noteworthy would occupy far more space than is at our disposal, and, indeed, if the pantomime has a fault, it is that it is so crowded with startling novelties, so brimful of good things, and it rattles along at such a rate, that by the transformation scene is reached the senses of the audience have become thoroughly bewildered by the succession of events that have passed before their eyes. When we consider our own case, we grieve to think of the thousands of young heads that will be turned by the *Babes in the Wood* during the next few weeks.

The curtain rises on The Infernal Forge, the haunt of the evil spirits of the play, the chief of whom, in this case an exception to the rule, is a smart, lithe little imp, in red tights and spangles, "Jack'o' Lantern" (Miss Nellie Bonverie), with the "Colorado Beetle" as chief demon. After we have learned that the poor unprotected Babes have been selected for the especial malice of the spirits by the power of the enchanter, the children themselves, sweetly sleeping in their cot, are summoned before us, but here they are taken in hand at a timely moment by "The Silver Fern Fay" (Miss Emma Toma), who takes the Babes under her protection, and literally, in the twinkling of an eye, transports herself and her charge to Fairy Land. This marvellous scene change, which receives the applause that such a surprise might be expected to produce, is only the introduction to the good things to follow. In the Lace Boudoir the two children preside at a levée of most of the old nursery favourites, and gracefully bow their recognition to "Little Bo-Peep," "The Marquis of Carabas," and his beautiful "White Cat" "Whittington," and his renowned "Puss," "Little Boy Blue," "Cinderalla," "Bo-Peep," and "Little Red Riding Hood," a skilfully designed set of figures which will set the blood of many a little heart bounding these Christmas holidays. Then, with a bang of gongs, we are ejected from Fairy Land as rapidly as we entered it, and find ourselves in the Village of Curdsuper-Cream, where the pantomime sets in in good earnest. "Prince Hilarious" (Miss Lizzie Coote) is the first to arrive, in his Miniature Albert Drag, specially manufactured for this pantomime by Mr. John Roberts, Streatham Road, drawn by two live ponies; he is received by his bewitching troupe of pages, and the equally fascinating retinue of "Baron de Boef," the wicked uncle (Mr. Wainwright). Then arrives the Baron himself, a bad wicked man, who bribed the detectives, who introduced American beef, who opposed the Thirlmere scheme, and committed other equally terrible villainies. The Baron proceeds to plot against his innocent charge and calls to his aid a singularly doubled-faced band, "The Miller and his men." The graceful Prince sings very effectively a song which will no doubt be encored nightly, "How does he do it?" De Boef replies in "Did you ever catch a weasel asleep?" Miss Emma Winslow (Miss Robson), much addicted to soothing-syrup, the delicate and maidenly nurse of the Babes, sings "Whoa, Emma," to which "Tommy o' Angel Meadow," one of the villains in the pay of the Baron, follows with an equally effective song "Go away!" and the whole ends up with a charming dance round the May Pole. In the next scene, the Babes are handed over to the two ruffians, "Bill o' th' Irk" (Mr. Oxborn), and "Tommy," aforesaid; and then, in Scene 5, we find them, each with a child by the hand, on The Road to the Forest, a beautifully painted scene in a series of five tableaux, in panorama, by the side of which, as the panorama moves along, the four travellers tramp towards the wood. After getting a glimpse of The Sewage Canal, and many other things which must be seen to be believed, we at last arrive at The Haunted Wood, where the weary Babes go to rest and the ruffians settle their differences in mortal combat. Now, summoned by the good "Fern Fay," come together all the fowls of the air, over whom presides "King Eagle" (Mr. Sloman, the bird-man). The King waxes eloquent, but though we wear feathers too, we could not quite catch the thread of his whistling argument, which, however, was perfectly intelligible to a huge chanticleer, who crowed repeated applause, and to a stately gander, who quacked a frequent "hear, hear." At the birds fly away, the children awake, when in rushes "Miss Winslow" to their rescue. Once more another lightning change of

scene takes place, and we reach the throne of Hilarity Castle, where a series of living pictures, giving the history of ladies' dresses from Eden to Eelskins, is charmingly presented. Scene 8 is another novelty. The drop shows a long sunny road, going upwards further than the eye can reach, but, notwithstanding the evident difficulty of the journey, the Baron and a dozen followers determine to do the ascent, and, in defiance of all common-sense probability, positively arrive at the top. This, too, like many things in this pantomime, must be seen to be believed. What awaits the travellers at the end of their journey we have not space to tell, but after "many changes" the poor Babes in the Wood find safety, the wicked Baron meets his deserts, virtue is rewarded, and wickedness punished—the one by being admitted to, the other banished from, the Grand Transformation Scene—The Crystal Falls of Fairyland—an authentic representation of that magnificent region, for it is "painted from sketches made on the spot." After the full burst of glory and red fire, the curtain falls, and audience and players have a needed respite before the harlequinade commences.

First performances of works requiring such delicate arrangement and dove-tailing as a Christmas pantomime do not often run smooth, but on Tuesday not a hitch occurred, everything went on as though the curtain had risen and fallen a score of times, and as we may expect it to do towards the end of its run, when use has begun to dim the many costly splendours of scenery and dresses.

The music throughout is good and well selected, and the songs which are very numerous, add in no small measure to the success of the pantomime; the singing of Miss Coote, Mr. Wainwright, Mr. Robson, and Mr. Doyle is especially commendable; but it is almost invidious to select any for particular mention where all fill their parts so admirably. We should, however, give just a word for the "Babes" whose parts are filled by the juvenile Misses Banks gracefully and prettily, and without the unpleasant "cheek" which generally distinguishes the work of the infant phenomenon.

CAWS OF THE WEEK.

Mr. Peter Rylands, M.P., may consider himself sat upon. In concluding a violent article on the hon. member's address to his constituents at Burnley, the *Evening Mail* says:—"For the rest we need only say that he is so utterly at sea upon the question of the Eastern war that we need not condescend to notice his opinions." No man could possibly survive slashing criticism like that.

It seems that the Queen's visit to Hughenden Manor must be regarded as a political event of the highest importance. The *Times* remarks that the visit "may be construed as a special mark of Royal approbation of the special views of a special minister." "Very likely," observes the *Pall Mall Gazette*; "indeed, it is a matter of certainty that the Queen would not have visited Hughenden if Her Majesty's relations with her Prime Minister were not of the most cordial description." When journals so generally opposed to each other chance to agree, as they do here, common people may be excused for thinking that there is something substantial in what they say.

If a minister forgets his text, or the place where his text is to be found, his position is by no means an enviable one. A Free Church minister in Glasgow was in this unhappy plight on Sunday last. He had intended to preach from the exciting words—"And Jonathan, Saul's son, arose and went to David in the wood." He explained that he had not marked the place, and apologised for his inability to rectify his mistake. He repeated what the subject was, and allowed his hearers to hunt up the text for themselves as best they could. This was bad enough in all conscience; but it was not quite so bad as that other Scotch minister, who, having lost his manuscript, said to his long-suffering flock: "Brethren, I have lost my sermon, but I shall read you a few chapters frae the Book o' Job, which you'll find to be worth a dozen o' my sermons!"

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Articles intended for insertion must be addressed to the Editor of the *City Jackdaw*, 51, Spear Street, Manchester, and must bear the name and address of the sender. We cannot be responsible for the preservation or return of manuscripts sent to us.

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Dear Sir,—I am requested by my friend, Capt. Henry Bird, who is now travelling in Siberia, to write that your Antilactic has completely cured him of a most violent attack of Lumbago, brought on by exposure during severe weather in crossing the mountains, and that one of his followers, who was found suffering from extreme prostration, cramps, and greatly impeded respiration, to a degree causing his comrades to look upon his cure as helpless, has wholly recovered from the same remedy. Capt. Bird adds that during all his travels he never possessed a more valuable medicine chest than now. It is with pleasure I make this communication, and you are at liberty to use the testimony in what way you think proper.—I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,

Mr. VICKERS, Custom House Chambers, Lower Thames Street.

F. R. FRANCIS, F.S.A., M.T.E., S.L.

18, Downs Park Road, Dalston, Nov. 9th, 1877.

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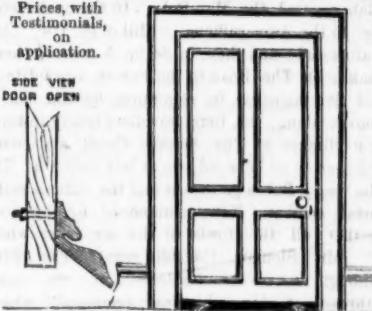
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Christmas and New Year's Cards, Wholesale and Retail.—Abel Heywood & Son, Oldham Street.

Christmas and New Year's Cards in Great Variety.—Abel Heywood & Son, Oldham Street.

DECEMBER 21, 1877.

THE CITY JACKDAW.

7

ESTABLISHED 1848.

THE GREAT SALE AT THOMAS PEEL'S, 125 and 127, OLDHAM STREET, COMMENCED ON MONDAY, DEC. 17TH; ENDS FEBRUARY 28TH.

DOORS OPEN AT 9-30 A.M.; CLOSE AT 6-30 P.M.

The season having again come round when my customers expect I will do as in former years, viz., place my valuable stock of BABY LINEN, LADIES' LINEN, and CHILDREN'S UNDERCLOTHING,

together with other goods, procured upon most advantageous terms, at SALE PRICES, I now take this early opportunity to inform my patrons and the public generally that for some weeks past I have been making purchases of MATERIALS and GARMENTS in magnitude far exceeding any previous year. The season having been so mild, has forced Manufacturers and Merchants to Sell at Heavy Losses, the DISCOUNT varying from TWENTY to FIFTY PER CENT, which advantages will be given to customers at this Sale.

LADIES' RESIDING IN ADJACENT TOWNS, who may not have visited this establishment within the last month, will find a marked improvement in the upstairs departments.

NEW ROOMS have been added, which will facilitate and expedite sales and orders, and I trust lead to increased business. There are three of these departments I wish to draw special attention to. First is the

LADIES' COSTUME DEPARTMENT.

This room is 40ft. long, and has just been newly decorated at considerable cost. It will be superintended by competent lady assistants of recognised ability and good taste. There will be found a rich assortment of BALL DRESSES in black, white, and all the leading fashionable colours; MUSLIN SLIPS, WOOL SHAWLS and MANTLES, INDIA SCARFS and MANTILLAS, Rich CASHMERE DRESSING GOWNS, foreign manufacture; Pink, Scarlet, Sky, Maroon, Drab, and Blue FLANNEL DRESSING GOWNS, embroidered with silk and wool; London and French Printed Flannel Gowns, with folds and trimmings of high-class finish; Petticoats in Silk and Satin, Coloured Stripes, and Fine Felts, prettily trimmed.

The SECOND ROOM has been fitted up to furnish COSTUMES and JACKETS for CHILDREN from three years to twelve years of age. It has been a want long felt, and which will now be supplied, where Ladies can meet with materials and styles suitable to those ages. A competent Assistant will always be in attendance to take measurements for Special Orders, which will be charged during the Sale at Sale Prices.

It will be a constant effort to produce PRETTY and BECOMING ATTIRE, at economical prices.

A large assortment of EVENING DRESSES now ready for CHILDREN.

MILLINERY

Is the third room I wish to draw attention to, it being next to the above. Ladies will have every opportunity of viewing some two or three hundred TRIMMED HATS, Infants' to Young Ladies' sizes, in all the leading shapes, colours, and styles, every attention being given to orders; and where MOURNING is required, assistants will be sent to take instructions.

ORDER OF SALE.

The Sale, like its predecessor, will be conducted on the same principle—viz., very substantial reductions are made on regular stock; SOILED GOODS sold at nominal prices; CLEARING LOTS at a small profit.

To ensure the above to customers, the usual ticket (which is always marked in plain figures) will remain on, and a new ticket, printed in red ink, and written sale price on, will be placed alongside, so that the purchaser may see at a glance the advantage gained.

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Soups, Fish, Entrées, Joints, and Sweets, in great variety. Dinner off the Joint, 1s. 10d. Chop or Steak, with Chips, 1s. Neapolitan and French Ices always ready. Families Supplied.

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Visitors will find the above hotel, which contains seventy beds, splendid commercial and coffee rooms, large bar and billiard-room, one of the most comfortable in Manchester. Private sitting and bed rooms *en suite*. Twelve fireproof and other stockrooms. Chop or steak, 1s. 6d.; and dinners from 2s., at any hour. Wines and spirits of the first quality. All charges strictly moderate. The above hotel is open at all hours of the night to receive travellers. An ordinary daily at 1-20—soup, joint, pastry, and cheese, 1s. 6d.

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THIS Magnificent Preparation strengthens the Nerves and Muscles, and improves the quality of the Blood. No water is used in its preparation and, as it contains phosphorus and other invaluable tonics in a state of solution, persons taking it may rely on a really strong and excellent tonic. It rapidly cures Nervous Debility, Consumption (in its earlier stages), all Wasting Diseases, Neuralgia, and Nervous and Mind Diseases. It is an excellent brain tonic, and speedily removes Depression of Spirits, St. Vitus' Dance, &c. For females of all ages it is invaluable, and for weakly children it cannot be too highly recommended.

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